

INCLASSTED
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ML01 PROGRAM
INTRODUCTION

MACNEIL: Konstantin Chernenko was named today to be the new Soviet leader to succeed Yuri Andropov. Chernenko called for peaceful coexistence with the West. We look in detail at Chernenko the man, at the kind of leadership he's likely to provide. And as President Reagan holds two summit meetings on the Middle East, we hear the kind of advice he's getting from Arab nations on Lebanon. Jim Lehrer's off. Judy Woodruff's in Washington. Judy?

WOODRUFF: Also tonight, we'll tell you why the auto industry is in good spirits these days, and how the airline industry is going to be watched more closely for safety problems. We'll hear a debate about a new Democratic proposal to overhaul Medicare. SEN. EDWARD KENNEDY (D-Mass.): We can save Medicare. And we can do so without raising taxes and without cutting benefits.

WOODRUFF: And we continue our series of interviews with all the Democrats running for president. Tonight, the Democrat who says he's different.

ANNOUNCER: The MacNeil-Lehrer Newshour is funded by AT&T, the Corporation for Public Broadcasting and this station and other public television stations.

ML02 USSR/ANDROPOV
DEATH

MACNEIL: The 280 million people of the Soviet Union have a new leader tonight, 72-year-old Konstantin Chernenko. Chernenko was elected general secretary of the Communist Party by unanimous vote of the Central Committee this morning. He succeeds Yuri Andropov who died last Thursday. Chernenko made his career in the shadow of the late President Leonid Brezhnev, whose assistant he was for more than 30 years. In his acceptance speech today, Chernenko said peaceful coexistence was needed more than ever in the age of nuclear weapons. Vice President George Bush arrived in Moscow as one of some 100 world leaders who will attend Andropov's funeral in Red Square tomorrow. On his arrival, Bush said there was an important opportunity ahead to reduce nuclear weapons and to increase cooperation between our people. Bush is expected to meet Chernenko after the funeral. Once again Igor *Kirolov, a veteran announcer, appeared on Soviet television with important news, the Central Committee of the Communist Party had elected a new general secretary. KIROLOV: ...Chernenko.

MACNEIL: So it was Konstantin Chernenko who led the way when members of the Politburo went to the House of Unions in Moscow to pay their respects to Yuri Andropov, the former general secretary and president of the Soviet

Presidium. And it was to Chernenko that leaders of foreign delegations from countries in the Communist bloc, the nonaligned and the anticommunist alliance looked for clues to the future policy of the Soviet superpower. And tomorrow, Chernenko will be the chief mourner when Andropov is buried in Red Square in a small cemetery between the Kremlin wall and the tomb of Lenin, near his predecessor, Leonid Brezhnev. Chernenko is the son of a Siberian peasant family who has risen steadily through the Communist Party ranks but who has never held government posts. Little is known of his private life, even whether he is married, and he's travelled very little outside the Soviet Union. At 72, about eight months younger than President Reagan, Chernenko is the oldest man ever to take power in the Soviet Union. A robust-looking man, with his high Slavic cheek bones and a shock of silver hair, Chernenko is known to have had health problems, including a bout with pneumonia last spring. The new Soviet leader differs in one respect from the majority of his Kremlin colleagues. He has published a number of articles and speeches on a broad range of issues and has a new collection set for release next month. Yesterday, the Sunday Times of London published an article by Chernenko, written before Andropov's death, commenting on the need to improve Soviet-American relations. He wrote, 'Today, it is more important than before to multiply our efforts toward mutual understanding. We are in favor of an active and fruitful dialogue with nations living under a different social system to ours, the United States and Great Britain in particular.' Chernenko echoed current Soviet public statements when he said in his article that whether the coming years will see cooperation or stiff confrontation between the two great powers depends on the United States. Judy?

ML03 USSR/
CHERNENKO

WOODRUFF: For a closer look at the personality and character of the new Soviet leader, we talked with Arkady Shevchenko. Mr. Shevchenko is the highest ranking Soviet official to defect to the U.S. In 1978, he left his post as a U.N. undersecretary general. Before that, he served as personal adviser to Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko. First of all, Mr. Shevchenko, how did Mr. Chernenko get to where he is? Is it because he was an assistant to Mr. Brezhnev? ARKADY SHEVHENKO (Former Soviet Official): He get to where he is now just because there was no other person in the group of the old man (sic) in the Politburo who is really qualified and can occupy the post of the general secretary. The major problem in the Politburo was not at differences over the policies, over issues of domestic or foreign policy. I think that they more or less agree on all that. But the problem was whether to have a new man from the new generation, either Romanov or Gorbachov, who are much more younger and belong to other generations or among the old people.

WOODRUFF: Well, is there any one thing about him that stands out that particularly qualifies him for this post? SCHEVCHENKO: Because he is the only one in the old generation people--there are six now--people in the Politburo who are over 70, all of them. And he's only one who's a member of Politburo and secretary of the party and the only one who is a professional party man, a party functionary all his life. All the others, Gromyko, defense, the foreign minister, Ustinov, they all are not really have a party career (sic). And party wanted their men to be at the head of the party.

WOODRUFF: Tell us a little bit about his traits. I mean, how intelligent is he? SCHEVCHENKO: You know, I can say that he is not bright intellect. He is less intellectual and less intelligent than Andropov. There's no question about that. He's not stupid, but.... And his strength is that he knows extremely well the party work, the party apparatus, how to manipulate with posts in the Central Committee. And his real strength lies with the man, or the real party level in the publics, in the regions of the Soviet Union.

WOODRUFF: So he has contacts throughout the country? SCHEVCHENKO: Exactly. And the last years of the, when Brezhnev was sick and for quite, several years....

WOODRUFF: Yeah. SCHEVCHENKO: Actually he was number two man in the Central Committee. And he decides where the great influence.

WOODRUFF: So, he.... My question was why, then, if he had these positive qualities, why did he lose out to Andropov? SCHEVCHENKO: Oh, he lose to Andropov for the simple reason that the majority, an old, old guards in the Politburo disliked him, are resentful of him because of two things: first, that he was a party man all his life, and, but he has no direct experience neither in economic management nor (sic) in foreign policy. He dealt with the party affairs, manipulation of the party, but never occupied himself in dependent posts, let's say, as a head of a region in the Soviet Union like most of the party men.

WOODRUFF: So you're saying they lacked respect for him? SCHEVCHENKO: They have a lack of respect for him because Brezhnev was pushing him. He was, when he was a general, he was a chief of the general department of the Central Committee and the secretary of the Politburo. But men like.... Yeah, but men like Ustinov or Gromyko considered him as, you know, like, you know, as a small player.

WOODRUFF: A small player. What kind of a leader.... Based on what you know, what kind of a leader do you think he'll be? Will he be strong and forceful? SCHEVCHENKO: I

think that he would not only be the leader who is the oldest leader which occupies the post of the general secretary of the party. But he will be a leader with less authority and with more limitations than anyone in the whole Soviet history, because the people who resent him in the Politburo, they will place on him so many limitations, they will not allow him to move without their decisions.

WOODRUFF: What, how do you expect him, then, to put his mark on policies and decisions coming out of the Soviet Union? SCHEVCHENKO: No, he will put definitely some mark. But I would say that the rule of collective leadership, or group of the Politburo which has been running the Soviet Union already for a long period of time, would be even more stronger (sic). And Chernenko as a functionary of the party, he realize and understand that very well.

WOODRUFF: Do you have a sense of what the Soviet people think of him? SCHEVCHENKO: You know, he's so dull and, as a man, and like the older Soviet leaders who always invent the jokes about their leaders, there is no jokes about him. The only one, recent one which I heard the other day, they say, you know, with the Andropov death we have one bastard less in the Politburo, but we have a new one, which is the same.

WOODRUFF: All right. Thank you, Mr. Schevchenko. We'll be back to you. Robin?

MACNEIL: For a look at how the Chernenko appointment might affect relations with this country, we talked to Arnold Horelick, director of the Rand UCLA Center for the Study of Soviet International Behavior. Mr. Horelick was the CIA's top intelligence expert for the Soviet Union from 1977 to 1980. He joins us tonight from public station KCET, Los Angeles. Mr. Horelick, do you agree with Mr. Schevchenko that Chernenko is going to be a leader with less authority and more limitations than any in Soviet history. ARNOLD HORELICK (Soviet Policy Analyst): I think that's probably true, although in the long run, that can change. It has happened a number of times in the past that leaders who took office lacking authority, lacking much in the way of reputations, turned out to be rather formidable leaders of the Soviet Union. But I think the problem...

MACNEIL: Would Krushchev probably...? Would Krushchev be an example of that? HORELICK: Khrushchev would be a very good example of that. Certainly he seemed overshadowed by *Malinkov, who seemed much the cleverer and better placed of the two. Indeed, if we go back in Soviet history to the Lenin succession in the '20s, Stalin seemed like a gray mediocrity to his colleagues in the '20s, certainly overshadowed by Trotsky. And so it's happened numerous

times in the past that the gray clerks have turned out to be very substantial leaders. There...

MACNEIL: But.... I beg your pardon. Go ahead. HORELICK: I'm sorry. In my judgment, though, the issue in U.S.-Soviet relations and in East-West relations, generally, is not going to turn so much on the personalities and the leadership abilities of the new Soviet leaders, Chernenko now and whoever might succeed him in the future, but really on larger structural differences between the United States and the Soviet Union that impede progress much more, it seems to me, than the health or the status of the Soviet leaders.

MACNEIL: So would you quarrel, then, with the statements that are coming out of Vice President Bush and the White House spokesmen that this is a moment of opportunity and everything which would seem to imply that the difficulties with the Soviet Union were somehow of Andropov's making? HORELICK: Well, I don't think the latter is true, although I do think we have a small window now, perhaps now and for the next few months, that if the impasse is to be broken, if the arms control negotiations are to resume, be resumed this year, and if a high level diplomatic engagement is to take place this year, it probably will have to happen sometime in the next few months. Certainly it will have to happen before the United States becomes deeply engrossed in our national elections, when anything that the president does in this area would then become suspect as grandstanding and where the already great distrust of the Soviets for President Reagan, I think, would be impossible to overcome. So that if we are to make any movement in the short run, it probably has to be now. But I don't think we should underestimate the seriousness of the real conflicts of interest that have kept the United States and the Soviet Union at loggerheads over these past few years.

MACNEIL: Will Chernenko have the authority to take any initiatives to significantly improve relations with this country? HORELICK: I don't believe that the problem, even during the period of Andropov's illness, when the Soviet Union was clearly governed by, intermittently, by himself and mostly by a committee, a committee in which Chernenko probably played an important role, I don't think that that was the principal impediment to a breakthrough in U.S.-Soviet relations. And I don't think that it's a lack of authority on Chernenko's part that stands in the way. I believe that the United States and the Soviet Union are presently out of phase with each other, both strategically and tactically. We want different things. We have quite different interests, both in the short and in the middle run. The strategic difference between us is that the United States.... This administration, when it took office, saw the world correlation of forces or, in our own

terminology, the strategic balances, as having turned very much against us during the 1970s. Not only in terms of the strategic nuclear balance and the conventional balance in Europe, but in general I think this administration saw the Soviet Union as having seized the strategic initiative politically and militarily around the globe. And the main priority of this administration from the beginning, and I believe to this very day, is to arrest those trends and, if possible, to reverse them. That doesn't mean negotiations to stabilize what the administration regarded as an unsatisfactory situation, but it means unilateral efforts on the part of the United States to alter it. Conversely, from the Soviet point of view, exactly the opposite is the case. They are resisting and, I think, will continue to resist administration efforts to undo the tremendous gains of the 1970s.

MACNEIL: And a, the fact of a new leader being the figurehead of the Soviet leadership is not going to make a major difference, is what you're saying? HORELICK: No, I don't think that that's a crucial difference. Although I, as I said, there may be a small opportunity in the next couple of months, if the tactical out-of-phasesness (sic) of the two sides can be overcome, to at least begin the dialogue again. That would require that the Soviets have an opportunity to get back into negotiations with us without appearing to have been humiliated, and for the United States to resume negotiations without having to make large one-sided concessions in advance, merely to get the Soviets to the table.

MACNEIL: Well, Mr. Horelick, thank you. Judy?

WOODRUFF: Mr. Schevchenko, you just heard Mr. Horelick describe very basic, serious differences that are ongoing between the United States and the Soviet Union. How do you think Mr. Chernenko's leadership fits into that picture? Do you agree with the picture he has just painted?

SCHEVCHENKO: I would say, first of all, that I perhaps would disagree that Chernenko would be fitted in the category of Stalin or Khrushchev. He is not that kind of a man, or Trotsky, or something.

WOODRUFF: You mean the earlier.... SCHEVCHENKO: He cannot be compared, with his intellect and with his ability as a politician, with the people of Khrushchev's stature or even Stalin's stature.

WOODRUFF: You're referring to Mr. Horelick's earlier point that these gray clerks became... SCHEVCHENKO: Yes. Earlier point. Now...

WOODRUFF: ...outstanding? SCHEVCHENKO: ...as far as the policy is concerned, I was, agree with most that has been

said here. And I really do believe that there are objective, basic factors which dictate, even for the Soviet leadership, improvement of the Soviet-American relation, irrespect (sic) to who is the leader, irrespect (sic) to what kind of the man Chernenko is, because there are other people in the Politburo. And Soviet Union leader really need a respite, the Soviet leadership understand (sic) that they need a better relation with the United States.

WOODRUFF: So you agree with Mr. Horelick that there..?
SCHEVCHENKO: Yes.

WOODRUFF: ...may be this window of opportunity...
SCHEVCHENKO: Yes. And there is....

WOODRUFF: ...and that there may be a reason for the Soviets to take advantage.... SCHEVECHENKO: I agree there is a window of opportunity and the very one thing with the Andropov death, they can.... Soviet leadership might very well have an excuse that, you know, this is commitments to walk out from arms control talks, the shooting down of the airplane, or so on and so forth. It was Andropov's...

WOODRUFF: All right. SCHEVECHENKO: ... commitment where we can now start a little new fresh.

WOODRUFF: All right. Let me ask Mr. Horelick about that. You hear the point Mr. Schevechenko's making. What do you think of that, Mr. Horelick? HORELICK: I think what is important, first, is for the Soviet leadership to become persuaded that it is better to address some of the basic U.S. strategic concerns that have been at the heart of the negotiations over the last couple of years, even at the cost of making some concessions to those concerns, rather than face unilateral U.S. efforts to protect them in a totally unregulated environment in which the net outcome might be worse from the Soviet point of view. If the Soviets are prepared to address some of those American concerns, the United States might conceivably be prepared to settle for marginal gains over the situation that we have had in the heretofore and abandon some of the more ambitious objectives. And it's on the basis of that kind of compromise, it seems to me, that a resumption of negotiations might be possible.

WOODRUFF: Would you agree with Mr. Schevechenko's point that there may be a reason right now for the Soviets to be looking for an opening for improvement? HORELICK: Yes. But I think there is a very major difficulty. From the Soviet point of view, maintaining anxiety in the West, in Europe in particular, but also in the United States, about the situation that obtains as a result of the absence of negotiations is what the Soviets count on in order to change basic Western negotiating positions. On the other

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hand, the administration's interest now is in starting negotiations, even if they are inconclusive, because the appearance of negotiations is crucial for the administration, both in terms of domestic politics and in terms of alliance cohesion. And the Soviets are not going to want to enter negotiations without feeling quite confident that the outcome of the negotiations will be to their substantive advantage. And that's a signal that is going to be very, very difficult for the United States to give them in advance.

WOODRUFF: All right. Thank you, Dr. Horelick, Mr. Schevchenko. This is a subject we'll be coming back to many times. Robin?

ML04 MARINES/
LEBANON

MACNEIL: The White House said today that all U.S. troops could be out of Lebanon within 30 days, except those needed to guard the U.S. Embassy. White House spokesman Larry Speakes said President Reagan agreed with the plan drawn up by Defense Secretary Weinberger and would approve it if other members of the peacekeeping force agree. The plan will be announced later this week when Vice President Bush has conferred with the British, French and Italians.

ML05 LEBANON/CIVIL
CONFLICT

MACNEIL: In Lebanon, French peacekeeping troops helped open a crossing point in the Green Line dividing the embattled halves of Beirut today, permitting a Red Cross convoy with relief supplies to enter Moslem west Beirut. President Gemayel, who has come up with a new political plan, told an interviewer, 'We are on the threshold of reaching a solution that could save all of Lebanon.' Saudi Arabia's official radio urged the factions to end the crisis and added that Lebanon was quote, 'not for President Gemayel alone,' a reference to the desire of Moslems to have a bigger share of power in Lebanon.

MACNEIL: In Washington, President Reagan met with King Hussein of Jordan to discuss new strategies for dealing with the situation in Lebanon. Afterwards, Mr. Reagan sounded optimistic. PRESIDENT REAGAN: In these times of trial, disillusionment would be easy. But my meeting today with King Hussein has reaffirmed to me that the good and decent people of this world can and will work together, and that progress can be made toward the perplexing problem of peace in the Middle East.

MACNEIL: Tomorrow, the president meets Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak and they will be joined by King Hussein for lunch. For some insight into the views the Egyptian leader will share with President Reagan, we turn to his chief foreign policy adviser, Osama El-Bas, who's chief of the Egyptian Cabinet and first undersecretary at the foreign office. Mr. El-Bas was part of the group which hammered out the final wording of the Camp David accords and has